AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method for manufacturing a texturized proteinaceous meat analogue product, ~~said product having a relative water activity of lower than about 0.8,~~ said method comprising the steps of:

~~subjecting, in an extruder,~~ providing a mixture containing about 20 to 80% by weight edible proteinaceous materials selected from the group consisting of predetermined mixtures of defatted soy flour, soy meal, soy concentrate, cereal gluten and egg white powder; up to about 5% by weight of edible mineral binding and cross-linking compounds; and up to about 50% by weight of an edible humectant system consisting of a mixture of glycerol and glucose in a predetermined ratio;

subjecting the mixture in an extruder to mechanical pressure and heat sufficient to convert the mixture into a hot protein lava; and

extruding the protein lava through and from a temperature controlled cooling die which cools and increases the viscosity of the protein lava to obtain a cohesive, texturized, extrudate slab or ribbon forming the meat analogue product in which vapour-flashing is substantially inhibited, wherein the meat analog product has a relative water activity of lower than about 0.8.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said mixture contains about 25% by weight glycerol and about 5% by weight of glucose.

3. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said meat analogue product has a relative water activity of between about 0.55 and about 0.68.

4. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said extruder is a twin-screw extruder with between four and six barrel sections and a screw speed operating in the range 300 rpm to 550 rpm.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein said extruder has five barrel sections and said screw speed is about 500 rpm.

6. (Previously presented) The method of claim 5, wherein each extruder barrel section has a length to diameter ratio of about 4.

7. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the temperature of said protein lava is restricted to less than about 120°C.

8. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the solidified extrudate slab or ribbon is further subjected to suitable size-reduction techniques for producing extrudate shreds that resemble in consistency and texture flaked or shredded meat.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein said size-reduction includes shredding in a hammer mill.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein said hammer mill includes a cage plate with a plurality of elongate discharge openings and a plurality of hammer bars hinged to discs attached to a rotating shaft.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein the extrudate is transferred directly from the cooling die to the hammer mill.

12. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further including the step of adding meat based product into said mixture.

13. (Original) The method claim 12, wherein said meat-product is added directly to said protein lava.

14. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein said mixture has a total moisture content of between about 15% and about 40% by mass.

15. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said mixture includes:

a dry ingredient blend, said dry ingredient blend making up about 50% of meat analogue product mass and including (by mass) about 40% defatted soy flour, about 40% vital wheat gluten, about 0.5% nutritional vitamin supplements, about 8.5% mineral supplements, about 2.0% flavouring agents, about 4.3% colouring agents and about 4.7% carbohydrate;

a humectant blend, said humectant blend making up about 30% of meat analogue product mass and including about 83% glycerol and about 17% glucose by mass; and

meat based material, said meat based material making up about 20% of extrudate mass and consisting of comminuted material derived from one or more animals selected from the group consisting of poultry, fish, ovines, bovines and porcines.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the cereal gluten is in vital or starch-containing form.

18. (Currently amended) A meat analog product, ~~said product having a relative water activity of lower than about 0.8,~~ said product produced by a method comprising the steps of:

~~subjecting, in an extruder,~~ providing a mixture containing about 20 to 80% by weight edible proteinaceous materials selected from the group consisting of predetermined mixtures of defatted soy flour, soy meal, soy concentrate, cereal gluten and egg white powder; up to about 5% by weight of edible mineral binding and cross-linking compounds; and up to about 50% by weight of an edible humectant system consisting of a mixture of glycerol and glucose in a predetermined ratio,

subjecting the mixture in an extruder to mechanical pressure and heat sufficient to convert the mixture into a hot protein lava; and

extruding the protein lava through and from a temperature controlled cooling die which cools and increases the viscosity of the protein lava to obtain a cohesive, texturized, extrudate slab or ribbon forming the meat analogue product in which vapour-flashing is substantially inhibited, wherein the meat analogue product has a relative water activity of lower than about 0.8.

19. (Previously presented) The meat analog product of claim 18, wherein said mixture contains about 25% by weight glycerol and about 5% by weight of glucose.

20. (Previously presented) The meat analog product of claim 18, wherein said meat analogue product has a relative water activity of between about 0.55 and about 0.68.

21. (Previously presented) The meat analog product of claim 18, wherein the solidified extrudate slab or ribbon is further subjected to suitable size-reduction techniques for producing extrudate shreds that resemble in consistency and texture flaked or shredded meat.

22. (Previously presented) The meat analog product of claim 18, wherein the cereal gluten is in vital or starch-containing form.